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SUBJECT

**GUNS**

FROM

JOHN KRICFALUSI

TO

VANESSA COFFEY

Hi Vanessa,

This is in response to your worries about George Liquor carrying a gun and using it.

First of all, let me emphasize that I agree totally with Nickelodeon's concern that violence and cruelty to animals are terrible things and shouldn't be glorified in any way. That's exactly what this cartoon is about! I want kids to think cruelty is bad! And ridiculing hunting is a great way to do it. But if we lie to kids about it by skirting the issue we will do more harm than good.

We must say what hunting is. It's about killing, not "hurting" or worse, "play-acting."

If George doesn't kill anything then hunting becomes a fantasy to kids. The "hunting" concept becomes abstracted, unreal. It looks like fun.

This <sup>is</sup> the problem with shows like GI-JOE and HE-MAN. ~~The~~ The acts of war and violence are abstracted. No one ever gets hurt. This message, to me at least, is OBSCENE. It says that violence doesn't bring <sup>ill</sup> consequences. To hide the reality of people doing wrong does not get us anywhere. Whatever we hide from them they can see to a much worse extent on Prime-Time TV and in the movies. Only there, violence is glamorized!

By ridiculing George Liquor we are taking the glamor out of hunting. <sup>is</sup> Even better, we are reinforcing kids' natural feelings about cruelty to other creatures.

Kids naturally like animals and understand they have feelings and rights. They are surrounded by adults who constantly tell them otherwise, either verbally or by example. How many kids have gone on their first fishing trip with dad only to be shocked upon reeling in a fish with a hook through its eye? And how many Dads calm the poor kid down with the amazing line,

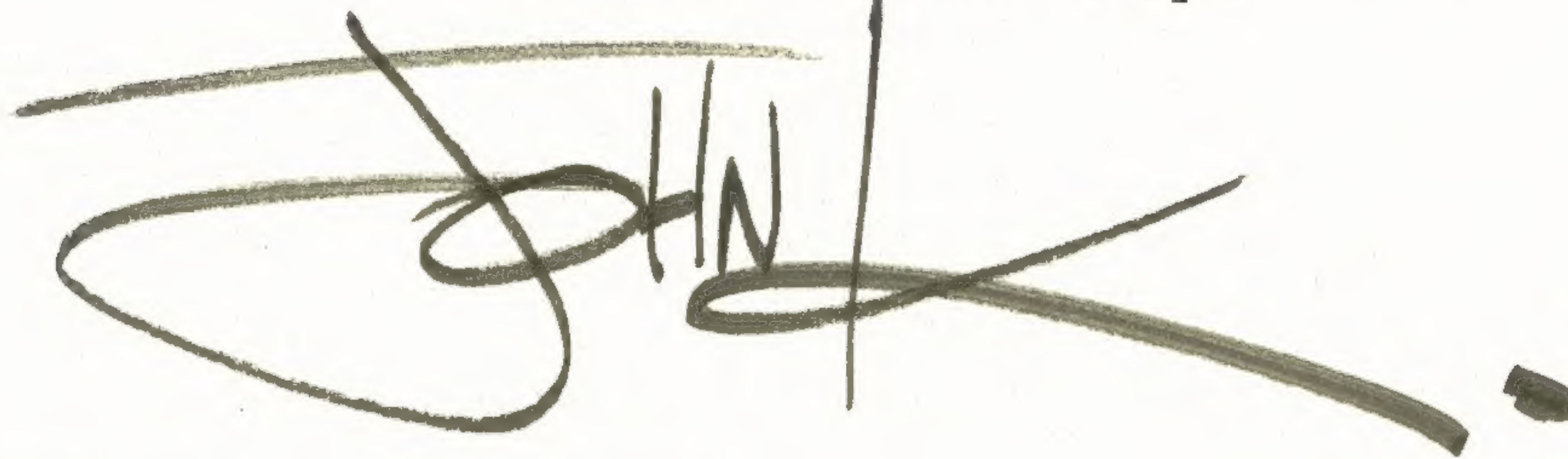


"It's okay son, fish don't feel pain."!! The problem is, most kids go on believing stuff like this and grow up to be just as cold and cruel as many other adults.

The unconscious message we are giving kids is, "Hey, it's okay to believe something different than what adults are telling you, we feel the same way, you have friends." George Liquor represents some of the bad points kids see in adults, particularly Dads. (He also has some good points, as you'll see in the board, otherwise we wouldn't believe in him as a real human being.) By totally caricaturing adults we tell the kids that it is sometimes okay to laugh at the ways of adults and to believe what your heart tells you.

I have to reassure you that we have no intention of showing graphic violence and we're not going to depress kids. It's just a cartoon. We are going to be funny and mirror the kids' feelings. We're on their side. Cartoon guns don't hurt people, real guns do. And if I can help it, kids will know that.

Your friend, The Pope



(ps. Am I a long-winded bastard or what)